

REMARKS

The claims now pending in this application are Claims 230-256, with Claims 230, 234, 237, 238, 243, 244, 248, 252, and 254-256 being the independent claims. Claims 230, 234, and 237 have been amended.

In the Official Action dated March 5, 2003, Claims 230-253 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Patent No. JP 2-122355 (Kiyozumi) and U.S. Patent No. 4,902,146 (Ishikawa). Claims 230-237, 252, and 254-256 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent No. 363273954 (Yabumoto). Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

The rejections of the claims over the cited art respectfully are traversed. Nevertheless, without conceding the propriety of the rejections, Claims 230, 234, and 237 have been amended to even more clearly recite various novel features of the present invention. Support for these amendments may be found in the original application.

Independent Claim 230 relates to an information processing apparatus comprising a connection unit, arranged for connecting a detachable external device to the information processing apparatus; a recognition unit, arranged for recognizing connection of the external device to the information processing apparatus; a discrimination unit, arranged for discriminating a device type of the external device connected by the connection unit on the basis of data stored in the connected external device; and a loading unit, arranged for, in response to the recognition unit recognizing connection of the external device, selecting a device driver program, provided in the external device, for controlling the connected external device or a device driver program existing in a memory area provided in the information processing apparatus for controlling the

connected external device on the basis of the device type discriminated by the discrimination unit, and loading the selected device driver program.

By this arrangement, the information processing apparatus can control an external device connected to the apparatus using a device driver program which is suitable for the type of external device that is connected using available memory and without requiring additional steps by the user.

The Kiyozumi patent teaches a package controller that controls a package having a memory that stores a driver for the package. When the package is connected to the controller, the CPU of the controller loads the driver from the package memory into the main memory of the controller and activates the package using the driver.

The Ishikawa patent discloses a printer that has a plurality of slots and a memory card that stores a plurality of programs corresponding to the respective slots. When the memory card is inserted into one of the slots, Ishikawa loads one of the programs corresponding to the one slot from the memory card.

However, the Kiyozumi and Ishikawa, patents fail to disclose or suggest the above-referenced features of the present application. In particular, the Kiyozumi and Ishikawa patents are not understood to disclose or suggest a discrimination unit, arranged for discriminating a device type of the external device connected by the connection unit on the basis of data stored in the connected external device.

Indeed, the Kiyozumi patent is silent regarding such a discrimination unit.

The Ishikawa patent discloses a CPU that discriminates the function of the memory card on the basis of one of the slots to which the memory card is inserted. The CPU then selects one of the programs stored in the memory card suitable for the function of the card

based on data indicative of the function-program correspondence stored in ROM2 (see Figure 1 of that patent). Yet, Ishikawa does not disclose the discrimination unit of the present invention.

Since both Kiyozumi and Ishikawa fail to disclose the discrimination unit, they also fail to disclose or suggest the above-described loading unit of the present invention which selects a driver program on the basis of the device type discriminated by the discrimination unit.

The Yabumoto patent discloses an information processing apparatus that selects one of a plurality of drivers stored in its storage, for controlling an external device (e.g. a keyboard, CRT monitor), in response to a device type of the external device.

However, the Yabumoto patent fails to disclose or suggest the above-referenced features of the present application. In particular, the Yabumoto patent is not understood to disclose or suggest a loading unit, arranged for, in response to said recognition unit recognizing connection of the external device, selecting a device driver program provided in the external device, for controlling the connected external device or a device driver program existing in a memory area provided in said information processing apparatus, for controlling the connected external device, on the basis of the device type discriminated by said discrimination unit, and loading the selected device driver program.

Yabumoto discloses selecting one of a plurality of drivers stored in the information processing apparatus, not in the external device. Therefore, that patent fails to teach selecting a device driver stored in the external device, as disclosed and claimed in the present invention.

For the above reasons, Claim 230 is allowable over the cited references. Independent Claims 234, 237, 252, and 254-256 recite similar features and are allowable for similar reasons.

Independent Claim 238 relates to an information processing apparatus comprising a discrimination unit, arranged for discriminating whether an external device is a first type of device in which a memory is provided for storing a device driver program for controlling the external device or a second type of device in which the memory is not provided; and a loading unit, arranged for selecting the device driver program for controlling the external device in the memory provided in the external device or the device driver program in a memory provided in the information processing apparatus, on the basis of the device type discriminated by the discrimination unit, and loading the device driver program in the memory provided in the external device if the device driver program in the memory provided in the external device is selected.

By this arrangement, the information processing apparatus can control an external device connected to the apparatus using a device driver program which is suitable for the type of external device that is connected using available memory and without requiring additional steps by the user.

In contrast, the Kiyozumi and Ishikawa patents are not understood to disclose or suggest a loading unit, arranged for selecting the device driver program for controlling the external device in the memory provided in the external device or the device driver program in a memory provided in the information processing apparatus, on the basis of the device type discriminated by the discrimination unit, and loading the device driver program in the memory provided in the external device if the device driver program in the memory provided in the external device is selected, as recited in Claim 238.

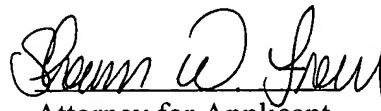
Accordingly, Claim 238 is allowable over these references under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Independent Claims 243, 244, and 248 recite similar features and are allowable for similar reasons.

The dependent claims depend from one or another of the independent claims and are believed allowable for the same reasons. Moreover, each of these dependent claims recites additional features in combination with the features of their respective independent claim and is believed allowable in its own right. Individual consideration of the dependent claims respectfully is requested.

Applicant believes the present Amendment is responsive to each of the points raised by the Examiner in the Official Action, and submits that the present application is in allowable form. Favorable consideration of the claims and passage to issue of the present application at the Examiner's earliest convenience earnestly are solicited.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


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